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OUTGOING MESSAGE

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AGE	COI	ACP	TOG	TPE	MRO	TRI	PAGES
SCM	0	0	0	0	0	0	

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DATE-TIME GROUP CITE MESSAGE REFERENCE NUMBER

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25X1 SOURCE REF: 25X1

ROUTING

1		4		7		10	
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3		6		9		12	

TO: IMMEDIATE WHITE HOUSE//SITUATION ROOM FOR MR [redacted]FAZIO,
STATE RCI//OPERATIONS CENTER FOR MR FRY[redacted], NMCC//ATTEN CIA REP,
25X1 TRE[redacted]ASURY DEPT//INFO [redacted]

25X1

FYI 109

ITEM NO: 1 DATE: 23 MAY 74

SUBJECT: SOVIET PUBLICIZE ANNUAL EVENT ALONG SINO-SOVIET BORDER

25X1 REF : [redacted]

MOSCOW HAS MADE PUBLIC WHAT IS THE STANDARD SOVIET [redacted] RESPONSE WHENEVER CHINA CHALLENGES THE USSR'S DE FACTO OWNERSHIP OF HEIHSIATSU ISLAND (CALLED BIG USSURI BY THE SOVIETS). THE ISLAND, STRATEGICALLY LOCATED OPPOSITE KHABAROVSK, IS ONE OF THE MOST SENSITIVE SPOTS ALONG THE SINO-SOVIET BORDER.

THE STATEMENT, CONVEYED TO THE CHINESE CHARGE IN MOSCOW TODAY, SAYS THAT MOSCOW IS WILLING TO FACILITATE CHINESE SHIPPING IN THE WATERS NEAR KHABAROVSK AND SEEMS AIMED AT SHOWING THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT MOSCOW IS WILLING TO ACCOMMODATE THE CHINESE. FOR ALL OF ITS UNEXCEPTIONAL, EVEN CONCILIATORY LANGUAGE, THE PUBLIC

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REFERENCE TO THE STATEMENT MAY BE INTENDED AS A WARNING TO THE CHINESE TO DESIST FROM THE KIND OF ACTIVITY THEY ENGAGED IN LAST SUMMER WHEN THEY WERE UNUSUALLY AGGRESSIVE IN CHALLENGING MOSCOW'S CLAIM TO THE ISLAND. SOVIET LEADERS SEEMS ANXIOUS TO AVOID ANOTHER FLARE-UP WITH THE CHINESE PRIOR TO THE SOVIET-US SUMMIT AND MAY BE MORE NERVOUS THAN USUAL IN LIGHT OF THE UNRESOLVED HELICOPTER INCIDENT. PUBLICATION OF THE MESSAGE OF COURSE, COULD ALSO BE INTENDED TO PREEMPT THOSE IN THE LEADERSHIP WHO WOULD PREFER THAT MOSCOW TAKE A HARDER LINE WITHTHE CHINESE.

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UNLIKE LAST YEAR, WHEN THE SOVIETS APPARENTLY THOUGHT A CHINESE SHIP WAS ACTUALLY GOING TO ATTEMPT APPROACHING KHABAROVSK, HOWEVER, CHINA'S BEHAVIOR SEEMS ROUTINE.

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IF THE CHINESE FOLLOWED SOVIET ADVICE, OF COURSE, IT WOULD BE TANTAMOUNT TO RECOGNIZING SOVIET SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE ISLAND. PEKING CONTENDS THAT THE INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY SHOULD FOLLOW THE MAIN NAVIGATION CHANNEL OF THE BORDER RIVERS AND THAT THEREFORE HEIHSIATSU BELONGS TO CHINA.

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